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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/607,374	CHAVEZ ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Blaine Basom	2173	

-- *The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address* --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE _3_ MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _30 October 2007_.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**.   2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) _40-58 and 60_ is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) _40-58 and 60_ is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☐ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3)☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application

6)☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

This Office action is responsive to the Request for Continued Examination (RCE) filed

under 37 CFR §1.53(d) for the instant application on October 30, 2007. The Applicants have

properly set forth the RCE, which has been entered into the application, and an examination on

the merits follows herewith.

Response to Arguments

The Examiner acknowledges the Applicants' amendments to claims 40 and 50, the

Applicants' cancellation of claim 59, and the Applicants addition of new claim 60. Regarding

the pending claims, the Applicants argue that the references cited in the previous Office Action

fail to teach the limitation, "each vendor folder containing help contents of respective help topics

provided by a corresponding vendor, the help contents usable by a unified taxonomy structure of

help categories and help topics," as is expressed in independent claims 40, 50, and 60. The

Examiner, however, respectfully disagrees with this argument.

Hickman (U.S. Patent No. 5,361,361 to Hickman et al.), cited in the previous Office

Acton, describes a plurality of vendor folders (i.e. "help files"), each containing help contents of

respective help topics provided by a corresponding vendor (see e.g. column 4, lines 20-29; and

column 5, lines 12-16). As described more fully below, Hickman discloses that this help content

is used (i.e. accessed and displayed) by a hierarchical and integrated listing of help topics (see

e.g. column 4, lines 30-51; and column 6, lines 4-66). For reasons asserted in previous Office

Actions, and again below, such a hierarchical and integrated listing is considered a unified

taxonomy structure like claimed. Accordingly, Hickman in fact describes a plurality of vendor folders, with each vendor folder containing help contents of respective help topics provided by a corresponding vendor, the help contents usable by a unified taxonomy structure of help categories and help topics, like claimed. The Applicants' arguments have thus been fully considered, but are not persuasive.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 40 and 45-48

Claims 40 and 45-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,361,361 to Hickman et al. (hereafter referred to as "Hickman"), over Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, and also over the article entitled "Managing On-Line Help in a Networked Multi-Platform Environment," which is authored by Irwin et al. (and hereafter referred to as "Irwin"). In general, Hickman discloses a method for providing concurrent access to hierarchical help provided by multiple independent applications (see column 1, lines 24-53). Such hierarchical help is specifically organized into categories, topics, and sub-topics (see column 2, lines 11-14). Moreover, Hickman discloses that such hierarchical help is implemented

on a computer, via a computer-readable medium (see column 2, line 60 – column 3, line 40; and

column 7, lines 14-19). Hickman thus presents a computer-readable medium having computer-

executable components for execution on a computer for presenting a plurality of help topics for

software and hardware components installed on the computer.

Claim 40

Specifically regarding claim 40, Hickman discloses that the computer system

implementing the above-described help system comprises:

1) A help content store for storing help contents for help topics, the help content store

having a plurality of separate vendor folders corresponding to different vendors of software

components installed on the computer, each vendor folder containing help contents of respective

help topics provided by a corresponding vendor, the help contents usable by a unified taxonomy

structure of help categories and help topics, the computer having installed thereon a plurality of

different software components wherein a first vendor corresponds to a first component selected

from the plurality of different software components and a second vendor corresponds to a second

component selected from the plurality of different software components, the first vendor and the

second vendor being included in the different vendors: Hickman discloses that the computer

comprises multiple independent applications (i.e. "software components"), provided by different

vendors, with each application having a set of help files (see column 1, lines 24-44; and column

4, lines 20-29). The help files comprise help content for a plurality of help topics (see e.g.

column 5, lines 12-16). The computer memory storing the applications, and thus the help files of

the applications, is considered a help content store for storing help contents for a plurality of help

topics, the help content store having a plurality of separate vendor folders (i.e. help files), which

correspond to different vendors of software components installed on the computer, each vendor

folder containing help contents of respective help topics provided by a corresponding vendor.

The help contents are usable by a unified taxonomy structure of help categories and help topics,

i.e. the help contents are presented and accessible by a "hierarchical and integrated of listing help

topics" (see e.g. column 4, line 40 – column 5, line 27).

  2) A help database containing mapping data for mapping the help topics from the

different vendors into the unified taxonomy structure of help categories and help topics, the

unified taxonomy structure being common to and inclusive of the help topics provided by the

different vendors and a first level of categories and a second level of categories in the unified

taxonomy structure being predefined and used by all the different vendors of software

components installed on the computer, the mapping data including data for each help topic for

identifying a node position of the help topic in the unified taxonomy structure and a location of a

corresponding help content of the help topic in the help content store: Hickman discloses that

each application comprises a help file directory, which is used to map the help topics associated

with the help files into a "hierarchical and integrated listing of help file topics from multiple

applications" (see column 4, lines 30-51). This hierarchical and integrated listing is considered a

"unified taxonomy structure," like that of the present invention, as it is common to and inclusive

of the help topics provided by the different vendors and used by the different vendors (for

example, see figure 5, and its associated description in column 5, line 49 – column 6, line 66).

As the levels of topics within the hierarchical and integrated listing are defined by the help file

directories of the various applications (see column 4, lines 30-51), each of the levels of

categories within the hierarchical and integrated listing – including the first level – is predefined.

The help file directories particularly include data for identifying the position of each topic or

sub-topic within the hierarchical and integrated listing, and also, data for identifying the location

of the help content associated with each help topic, the help content being stored in the help files

described above (see column 4, line 52 – column 5, line 27). This set of help file directories

associated with the applications stored on the computer system thus provides a help database,

like that of the claimed invention, comprising mapping data for mapping help topics into a

unified taxonomy structure being common to and inclusive of the help topics provided by the

different vendors, whereby a first and second level of categories in the unified taxonomy

structure is predefined and used by all the different vendors of software installed on the computer

(each application has help topics presented on the first level), and whereby the mapping data

includes data for each help topic for identifying a node position of each help topic in the

taxonomy structure and a location of corresponding help content in a help content store.

3) A help content update module for updating help contents in the content store and the

mapping data in the help database based on update packets received from the vendors: Hickman

discloses that a help utility automatically recognizes the installation of new applications and

includes help information topics from the newly installed applications into the above-described

hierarchical outline structure (see column 2, lines 19-25). Such a help utility thus comprises a

help content update module for updating help contents received in the content store and the

mapping data in the help database based on update packets, i.e. applications or new versions of

applications, which are received from vendors.

4) A help application for providing a user interface for presenting the help topics to a user, the help application being programmed to interactively display the unified taxonomy structure using mapping data in the help database and help contents in the content store, including displaying help categories and help topics in the unified taxonomy structure in response to user selections, retrieving help contents of a user-selected help topic, and displaying the help content of the user-selected help topic: Hickman discloses that the above-described help utility is also used to display the hierarchical outline structure of help topics to a user (see column 6, lines 4-36), and also, is used to retrieve and display help content associated with each help topic in response to user-selection of the help topic displayed in the outline structure (see column 6, lines 37-66). This help utility is consequently considered a help application like that of the claimed invention, which is for providing a user interface for presenting help topics to a user, and which is programmed to interactively display a unified taxonomy structure using mapping data in a help database and help contents stored in a content store, including displaying help categories and help topics in the unified taxonomy structure in response to user selections, retrieving help contents of a user-selected help topic, and displaying the help content of the user-selected help topic.

Accordingly, Hickman presents a computer-readable medium similar to that of claim 40, which is for presenting a unified taxonomy structure having a predefined first and second level of categories of help topic for software components installed on a computer. However, Hickman does not explicitly disclose that the plurality of vendor folders (i.e. help files) within the help content store include vendor folders corresponding to vendors of hardware components installed on the computer. Hickman, that is, fails to explicitly teach that the plurality of separate vendor

folders (i.e. help files) also include folders corresponding to vendors of hardware components

installed on the computer, the computer having installed thereon a plurality of different hardware

components, as is required by claim 40. Nevertheless, computers having stored thereon help

files provided by different vendors of hardware components installed on the computer are well

known in the art.

For example, the "BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION" section of the Specification

of the instant application discloses that both software and hardware vendors provide help

information, stored on computer, for easy access by a user:

In the early days of the personal computer era, each piece of computer software

and hardware by reputable vendors typically came with one or more user's manuals,

most of them tended to be either too voluminous and difficult for average users to use, or

not comprehensive enough to provide answers to many questions a user might have...

As more computer processing power and system memory became available, there

was a significant improvement in the way computer help information was provided to the

users. Specifically, help information regarding a software program or a hardware device

may be organized by the vendor of that product into different help topics that a user can

access and view on the computer...As the Internet has become popular and widely

accessible, many software and hardware vendors have also set up online support centers

on the World Wide Web, where a user can search for technical information and obtain

online technical support for diagnosis and troubleshooting. These new approaches of

providing help information have become so popular that many software and hardware

> *products nowadays do not even come with old-fashioned paper manuals.* (See page 1,
>
> line 24 – page 2, line 25 of the Specification, received 6/30/2000).

The Applicants' Admitted Prior Art provided in the Specification thus discloses that, at the time

of the invention, it was well known to provide help information for hardware components of a

computer, the hardware components and associated help information provided by specific

vendors.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the

teachings of Hickman and the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art before him at the time the

invention was made, to modify the help content store of Hickman such that it also includes help

files provided by vendors of hardware components installed on the computer, like suggested by

the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, i.e. such that help information regarding hardware

components is also accessible in the unified taxonomy structure. It would have been

advantageous to one of ordinary skill to include help information for hardware components

because computer users – even experienced users – at times require help with hardware

components, as is taught by the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art (See page 1, lines 15-26 of the

Specification, received 6/30/2000). Accordingly, Hickman and the Applicants' Admitted Prior

Art teach a computer-readable medium similar to that of claim 40, which is for presenting a

unified taxonomy structure having a predefined first and second level of categories of help topic

for software components installed on a computer. However, as demonstrated by figures 4A, 4B,

and 5 of Hickman, the help topics presented within the unified taxonomy structure are organized

according to the application to which they are associated. That is, the help topics for each

application are presented together, with the first level of help topics within the unified taxonomy

structure comprising the major help topics of each application. Consequently, the first and

second levels of categories within the unified taxonomy structure of Hickman are not static, as

required by claim 40, since adding or removing an application (and its help files) would result in

the addition or removal of help topics from the first level and second levels.

Nevertheless, organizing application help files in a taxonomy structure, with predefined

and static first and second levels of categories, is well-known in the art. For example, Irwin

presents such a taxonomy structure (referred to as a "help tree"), which categorizes the help

content for software existing on one or more UNIX-based computer systems (see e.g. "THE

NEW HELP TREE" on page 158, and Figure 1 on pages 159-160). As demonstrated by Irwin,

the first and second level of categories in this structure are predefined, static, and used by all the

different vendors of software and hardware components installed on each computer (see e.g.

"THE NEW HELP TREE" on page 158, and Figure 1 on pages 159-160).

As described above, the help topics presented within the unified taxonomy structure of

Hickman are organized according to the application to which they are associated. Having a large

amount of applications would result in a large first level of help topics. It would have therefore

been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Hickman, the Applicants'

Admitted Prior Art, and Irwin before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the

unified taxonomy structure taught by Hickman and the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art to include

additional levels, including a static first and second levels, to organize the plurality of help

topics, as done by Irwin and described above. It would have been advantageous to one of

ordinary skill to utilize such a combination because the help files, being organized hierarchically,

would be easier to find, as is demonstrated by Irwin. Accordingly, Hickman, the Applicants'

Admitted Prior Art, and Irwin teach a computer-readable medium like that of claim 40.

Claims 45-48

Concerning claim 45, Hickman discloses that that a help utility may automatically

recognize the installation of new applications, and as described above, include help information

topics from the newly installed applications into the above-described hierarchical and integrated

listing by updating the help directories. As described above, such a help utility is considered a

help content update module, like that of the claimed invention. It is understood that a user may

similarly remove applications, as is known in the art. Since the help directories specify the help

topics for applications *installed* on the computer system, it is interpreted that removing an

application would remove a directory for that application. Consequently, the help database,

which as described above is the conglomeration of such directories, would be updated. Thus it is

understood that the help content update module of Hickman is programmed to add, move, and

remove help topics from the hierarchical and integrated listing by updating the mapping data in

the help database.

With respect to claim 46, Hickman discloses that a user may perform a search for a

particular help topic or set of help topics (see column 6, line 67 – column 7, line 13). In

particular, the above-described help directories are searched to find topics that match user-

specified search criteria (see column 8, lines 26-43). The help directories, which as described

above are considered a help database, thus comprise data specifying a search keyword associated

with each help topic, the search keyword being the name of the help topic.

As per claims 47-48, Hickman discloses that the above-described help file directories, which are considered a help database, comprise a topic descriptor field (see column 4, lines 61-65). This descriptor field contains an alphanumeric string that specifies the help file content for a particular topic or sub-topic within help files, and which is capable of being displayed to the user (see column 4, line 65 – column 5, line 2). In other words, it is interpreted that this descriptor field comprises the name of each topic or sub-topic. Consequently, this descriptor field is used to specify an index string, i.e. name, associated with each help topic. Hickman further discloses that a menu selection button may be selected in order to display the hierarchical and integrated listing of topic and sub-topic names (see column 5, line 49 – column 6, line 36). Thus the user interface provided by the help application of Hickman includes an interface element presenting an option to view index strings of help topics.

Claims 44 and 49

Claims 44 and 49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Hickman, Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, and Irwin, as applied above in the rejection for claim 40, and also over U.S. Patent No. 6,236,989, which is attributed to Mandyam et al. (and hereafter referred to as "Mandyam"). As described above, Hickman, Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, and Irwin present a computer-readable medium like that of claim 40. In particular, Hickman discloses a help file directory, which as described above, contains mapping data for mapping help topics into a unified taxonomy structure of help categories and help topics. It is interpreted that the structure of the directory implicitly denotes the parent node of each help topic in the taxonomy structure. For example, referring to the directories of figures 4A and 4B

and the associated hierarchical structure of figure 5, the topics and sub-topics in the hierarchical

structure are displayed in the same order as listed in the directories. Consequently in the

directories of Hickman, the parent of a sub-topic is specified by the first topic preceding the sub-

topic. In other words, the mapping data for each topic implicitly includes a parent ID identifying

a parent node of the topic in the unified taxonomy structure. Continuing on, Hickman further

discloses that the help file directory includes a file identifier field, which defines the location of

the help file corresponding to each help topic (see column 5, lines 2-6). Hickman, the

Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, and Irwin, however, do not explicitly specify that this file

identifier field comprises a URL, as expressed in claim 44, or that the help contents in the help

files are written in a mark-up language, as is specified in each of claim 49.

Like Hickman, Mandyam discloses a method for providing help information for a

software application residing on a computer. More specifically, and regarding the claimed

invention, Mandyam discloses that the help information may be migrated to HTML and stored

on a web server, from which it may be accessed by specifying a URL associated with the content

(see column 6, lines 24-34, and column 2, lines 44-50).

Consequently, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time

the invention was made to modify the method of Hickman, Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, and

Irwin such that the help files are accessed from a web server, as is done by Mandyam. In other

words, it would have been obvious to modify Hickman such that the file identifier field

comprises a URL which specifies the location of the help contents associated with each help

topic, the help contents being written in HTML, as is taught by Mandyam. One would have been

motivated to create such a combination because storing help files on a web server consumes less

space on the user's computer, as is taught by Mandyam (see column 6, lines 24-29).

Claims 41-43

Claims 41-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the

combination of Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, and Irwin, as applied above in the

rejection for claim 40, and also over U.S. Patent No. 5,825,356, which is attributed to Habib et

al. (and hereafter referred to as "Habib"). As shown above, Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted

Prior Art, and Irwin teach a computer-readable medium, like that recited in claim 40, which is

for providing help information. Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, and Irwin,

however, do no explicitly teach that such help information includes a script library for storing a

plurality of script library objects used by the help contents stored in the help content store, as is

expressed in claim 41.

Like Hickman, Habib presents a method for providing help information to a user,

wherein this help information is organized into various topics and is presented on the user's

computer (see column 3, lines 44-51). Habib additionally discloses that the presentation of help

information includes displaying a "do-it-all" button, which when selected, causes the computer

to execute a script in order to complete a task regarding a selected help topic (see column 1, lines

57-60, and column 4, line 57 – column 6, line 3). Such scripts are particularly maintained in a

script library referred to as a "catalog file" (see column 13, lines 41-67). Consequently, like

recited in claim 41, Habib presents a script library for storing a plurality of script library objects

used by the help contents.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, and Habib before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the help system taught by Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, and Irwin such it includes buttons with similar functionality to the "do-it-all" buttons described above and by Habib. It would have been advantageous to one of ordinary skill to utilize such a combination because "do-it-all" buttons provide a faster means of fixing a problem than that of manually fixing the problem, as is expressed by Habib (see column 4, lines 15-19).

Regarding claims 42 and 43, since particular sets of scripts are associated with specific help contents, as is expressed above, it is apparent that with the above-described combination of Hickman, Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, and Habib, there exists some sort of store which is checked to identify which scripts to execute for particular help content. Habib particularly discloses that, for the help content to access a script, the help content must know the name of the script (see column 13, lines 41-65, particularly lines 49-52). Consequently, each help topic is considered to necessarily comprise storage for storing information, specifically the names of required scripts, which identifies that the help content associated with the topic is authorized to access such scripts. The help application checks these script names to determine what scripts the help content is allowed to access. Such storage storing these script names is therefore considered an "authorization store," like that described in claims 42 and 43.

Claims 50 and 55-58

, Claims 50 and 55-58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, and Irwin, which is described above, and also over the Portable Document Format (PDF), as described by the "Portable Document Format Reference Manual, Version 1.2".

Claim 50

. As described above (see e.g. the rejection for claim 40), Hickman discloses a computer comprising: a plurality of software and hardware components installed on the computer; a help content store for storing help contents for help topics for software components installed on the computer, the help content store having a plurality of separate vendor folders corresponding to different vendors of the software components installed on the computer, each vendor folder containing help contents of respective help topics provided by a corresponding vendor, the help topics useable by a unified taxonomy structure of help categories and help topics, the computer having installed thereon a plurality of different software components wherein a first vendor corresponds to a first component selected from the plurality of different software components and a second vendor corresponds to a second component selected from the plurality of different software components, the first vendor and the second vendor being included in the different vendors; a help database containing mapping data for mapping the help topics from the different vendors into the unified taxonomy structure of help categories and help topics, the unified taxonomy structure being common to and inclusive of the help topics provided by the different vendors, and used by all the different vendors of software and hardware components installed on

the computer, the mapping data including data for each help topic for identifying a node position

of the help topic in the unified taxonomy structure and a location of corresponding help content

of the help topic in the help content store; a help content update module for updating help

contents in the content store and the mapping data in the help database based on update packets

received from the vendors; and a help application for providing a user interface for presenting

the help topics to a user, the help application being programmed to interactively display the

unified taxonomy structure using mapping data in the help database and help contents in the

content store, including displaying help categories and help topics in the unified taxonomy

structure in response to user selections, retrieving help contents of a user selected help topic and

displaying the help content of the user-selected help topic, as is required by claim 50. The

Applicants Admitted Prior Art further teaches storing help files (i.e. "vendor folders")

corresponding to vendors of hardware components installed on the computer, as is described

above in the Rejection for claim 40. In addition, Irwin teaches using a unified taxonomy

structure comprising a first level of categories that are predefined and static, as is described

above. Accordingly, Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, and Irwin teach a computer

similar to the computer of claim 50. Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, and Irwin,

however, do not explicitly teach implementing a mapping data file including an action field

configurable to include data to indicate whether the contents or mapping of the topics are to be

added, removed, or updated, as is required by claim 50. Nevertheless, adding such an action

field to a file to indicate that portions of the file are updated is well-known in the art.

For example, the Portable Document Format generally describes an "incremental

update," in which a file is updated without rewriting the entire file (see e.g. section 5.6 on pages

70-72). Such an incremental update entail appending a cross-reference section to the end of the

file to indicate contents of the file that are to be added, removed, or updated (see e.g. section 5.6

on pages 70-72).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the

teachings of Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, and the PDF Reference

Manual before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the help application taught by

Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, and Irwin such that it is updated via incremental

update, like described in the PDF Reference Manual. That is, it would have been obvious to

modify the mapping data of Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, and Irwin to include

an action field (i.e. a cross-reference section) that indicates contents or topics that are added,

removed, or updated, when updating the help contents or taxonomy structure. It would have

been advantageous to one of ordinary skill to utilize this combination because such an

incremental update allows the files to be updated, but without rewriting the entire files, as is

taught by the PDF Reference Manual. Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, and

the PDF Reference Manual thus teach a computer like that of claim 50.

Claims 55-58

Concerning claim 55, Hickman discloses that that a help utility may automatically

recognize the installation of new applications, and as described in the previous paragraphs,

include help information topics from the newly installed applications into the above-described

hierarchical and integrated listing by updating the help directories. As described above, such a

help utility is considered a help content update module, like that of the claimed invention. It is

understood that a user may similarly remove applications, as is known in the art. Since the help

directories specify the help topics for applications *installed* on the computer system, it is

interpreted that removing an application would remove a directory for that application.

Consequently, the help database, which as described above is the conglomeration of such

directories, would be updated. Thus it is understood that the help content update module of

Hickman is programmed to add, move, and remove help topics from the hierarchical and

integrated listing by updating the mapping data in the help database.

With respect to claim 56, Hickman discloses that a user may perform a search for a

particular help topic or set of help topics (see column 6, line 67 – column 7, line 13). In

particular, the above-described help directories are searched to find topics that match user-

specified search criteria (see column 8, lines 26-43). The help directories, which as described

above are considered a help database, thus comprise data specifying a search keyword associated

with each help topic, the search keyword being the name of the help topic.

As per claims 57-58, Hickman discloses that the above-described help file directories,

which are considered a help database, comprise a topic descriptor field (see column 4, lines 61-

65). This descriptor field contains an alphanumeric string that specifies the help file content for

a particular topic or sub-topic within help files, and which is capable of being displayed to the

user (see column 4, line 65 – column 5, line 2). In other words, it is interpreted that this

descriptor field comprises the name of each topic or sub-topic. Consequently, this descriptor

field is used to specify an index string, i.e. name, associated with each help topic. Hickman

further discloses that a menu selection button may be selected in order to display the hierarchical

and integrated listing of topic and sub-topic names (see column 5, line 49 – column 6, line 36).

Thus the user interface provided by the help application of Hickman includes an interface element presenting an option to view index strings of help topics.

Claim 54

Claims 54 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, and the Portable Document Format (PDF), which is described above, and also over U.S. Patent No. 6,236,989, which is attributed to Mandyam et al. (and hereafter referred to as "Mandyam"). As described above, Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, and PDF teach a computer like that of claim 50. In particular, Hickman describes a help file directory, which as described above, contains mapping data for mapping help topics into a unified taxonomy structure of help categories and help topics. It is interpreted that the structure of the directory implicitly denotes the parent node of each help topic in the taxonomy structure. For example, referring to the directories of figures 4A and 4B and the associated hierarchical structure of figure 5, the topics and sub-topics in the hierarchical structure are displayed in the same order as listed in the directories. Consequently in the directories of Hickman, the parent of a sub-topic is specified by the first topic preceding the sub-topic. In other words, the mapping data for each topic implicitly includes a parent ID identifying a parent node of the topic in the unified taxonomy structure. Continuing on, Hickman further discloses that the help file directory includes a file identifier field, which defines the location of the help file corresponding to each help topic (see column 5, lines 2-6). Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, and PDF, however, do not explicitly specify that this file identifier field comprises a URL, as expressed in claim 54.

Like Hickman, Mandyam discloses a method for providing help information for a

software application residing on a computer. More specifically, and regarding the claimed

invention, Mandyam discloses that the help information may be migrated to HTML and stored

on a web server, from which it may be accessed by specifying a URL associated with the content

(see column 6, lines 24-34, and column 2, lines 44-50).

Consequently, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time

the invention was made to modify the method of Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art,

Irwin, and PDF such that the help files are accessed from a web server, as is done by Mandyam.

In other words, it would have been obvious to modify Hickman such that the file identifier field

comprises a URL which specifies the location of the help contents associated with each help

topic, the help contents being written in HTML, as is taught by Mandyam. One would have been

motivated to create such a combination because storing help files on a web server consumes less

space on the user's computer, as is taught by Mandyam (see column 6, lines 24-29).

Claims 51-53

Claims 51-53 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the

combination of Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, and PDF, which is

described above, and also over U.S. Patent No. 5,825,356, which is attributed to Habib et al. (and

hereafter referred to as "Habib"). As shown above, Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior

Art, Irwin, and PDF teach a computer like that recited in claim 50, which is for providing help

information. Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, and PDF, however, do not

teach that such help information includes a script library for storing a plurality of script library

objects used by the help contents stored in the help content store, as is expressed in claim 51.

Like Hickman, Habib presents a method for providing help information to a user,

wherein this help information is organized into various topics and is presented on the user's

computer (see column 3, lines 44-51). Habib additionally discloses that the presentation of help

information includes displaying a "do-it-all" button, which when selected, causes the computer

to execute a script in order to complete a task regarding a selected help topic (see column 1, lines

57-60, and column 4, line 57 – column 6, line 3). Such scripts are particularly maintained in a

script library referred to as a "catalog file" (see column 13, lines 41-67). Consequently, like

recited in claim 51, Habib presents a script library for storing a plurality of script library objects

used by the help contents.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the

teachings of Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, PDF, and Habib before him at

the time the invention was made, to modify the help system taught by Hickman, the Applicants'

Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, and PDF such it includes buttons with similar functionality to the "do-

it-all" buttons described by Habib. It would have been advantageous to one of ordinary skill to

utilize such a combination because "do-it-all" buttons provide a faster means of fixing a problem

than that of manually fixing the problem, as is expressed by Habib (see column 4, lines 15-19).

Regarding claims 52 and 53, since particular sets of scripts are associated with specific

help contents, as is expressed above, it is apparent that with the above-described combination of

Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, PDF, and Habib, there exists some sort of

store which is checked to identify which scripts to execute for particular help content. Habib

particularly discloses that, for the help content to access a script, the help content must know the

name of the script (see column 13, lines 41-65, particularly lines 49-52). Consequently, each

help topic necessarily comprises storage for storing information, specifically the names of

required scripts, which identifies that the help content associated with the topic is authorized to

access such scripts. The help application checks these script names to determine what scripts the

help content is allowed to access. Such storage storing these script names is therefore considered

an "authorization store," like that described in claims 52 and 53.

Claim 60

Claim 60 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination

of Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, and the Portable Document Format

(PDF), which is described above, and also over the U.S. Patents to Mandyam and Habib, which

are also described above.

As described above (see e.g. the rejection for claims 50 and 55-58), Hickman, the

Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, and the Portable Document Format (PDF) teach a

computer comprising:

a plurality of software and hardware components installed on the computer;

a help content store for storing help contents for help topics for software

components installed on the computer, the help content store having a plurality of

separate vendor folders corresponding to different vendors of the software components

installed on the computer, each vendor folder containing help contents of respective help

topics provided by a corresponding vendor, the help topics useable by a unified

taxonomy structure of help categories and help topics, the computer having installed

thereon a plurality of different software components wherein a first vendor corresponds

to a first component selected from the plurality of different software components and a

second vendor corresponds to a second component selected from the plurality of different

software components, the first vendor and the second vendor being included in the

different vendors;

a help database containing mapping data for mapping the help topics from the

different vendors into the unified taxonomy structure of help categories and help topics,

the unified taxonomy structure being common to and inclusive of the help topics

provided by the different vendors and a first level of categories in the unified taxonomy

structure being predefined, static, and used by all the different vendors of software and

hardware components installed on the computer, the mapping data including data for

each help topic for identifying a node position of the help topic in the unified taxonomy

structure and a location of corresponding help content of the help topic in the help

content store, the mapping data stored in a mapping data file including an action field

configurable to include data to indicate whether the contents or mapping of the topics are

to be added, removed, or updated;

a help content update module for updating help contents in the content store and

the mapping data in the help database based on update packets received from the vendors,

wherein the help database contains data specifying a search keyword associated with each

help topic and contains data specifying an index string associated with each help topic,

wherein the user interface provided by the help application includes an interface element

presenting an option to view index strings of the help topics, and wherein the help content

update module is programmed to add, move, and remove help topics from the unified

taxonomy structure by updating the mapping data in the help database;

and a help application for providing a user interface for presenting the help topics

to a user, the help application being programmed to interactively display the unified

taxonomy structure using mapping data in the help database and help contents in the

content store, including displaying help categories and help topics in the unified

taxonomy structure in response to user selections, retrieving help contents of a user

selected help topic and displaying the help content of the user-selected help topic, as is

required by claim 60.

The combination of Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, and the Portable

Document Format (PDF) – as described above in the rejections for claims 50 and 55-58 – thus

teaches a computer similar to that of claim 60. It is apparent that the help database denotes the

parent node of each help topic in the taxonomy structure. For example, referring to the

directories of figures 4A and 4B of Hickman and the associated hierarchical structure of figure 5

of Hickman, the topics and sub-topics in the hierarchical structure are displayed in the same

order as listed in the directories. Consequently in the directories of Hickman, the parent of a

sub-topic is specified by the first topic preceding the sub-topic. In other words, the mapping data

within the help database for each topic implicitly includes a parent ID identifying a parent node

of the topic in the unified taxonomy structure. Continuing on, Hickman further discloses that the

help file directory includes a file identifier field, which defines the location of the help content

corresponding to each help topic (see column 5, lines 2-6). Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted

Prior Art, Irwin, and PDF, however, do not explicitly specify that this file identifier field

comprises a URL, as expressed in claim 60.

Like Hickman, Mandyam discloses a method for providing help information for a

software application residing on a computer. More specifically, and regarding the claimed

invention, Mandyam discloses that the help information may be migrated to HTML and stored

on a web server, from which it may be accessed by specifying a URL associated with the content

(see column 6, lines 24-34, and column 2, lines 44-50).

Consequently, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time

the invention was made to modify the method of Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art,

Irwin, and PDF such that the help files are accessed from a web server, as is done by Mandyam.

In other words, it would have been obvious to modify Hickman such that the file identifier field

comprises a URL which specifies the location of the help contents associated with each help

topic, the help contents being written in HTML, as is taught by Mandyam. One would have been

motivated to create such a combination because storing help files on a web server consumes less

space on the user's computer, as is taught by Mandyam (see column 6, lines 24-29). Hickman,

the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, PDF, and Mandyam thus teach a computer similar to

that recited in claim 60. Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, PDF, and

Mandyam, however, do not teach that such help information includes a script library for storing a

plurality of script library objects used by the help contents stored in the help content store, as is

expressed in claim 60.

Like Hickman, Habib presents a method for providing help information to a user,

wherein this help information is organized into various topics and is presented on the user's

computer (see column 3, lines 44-51). Habib additionally discloses that the presentation of help

information includes displaying a "do-it-all" button, which when selected, causes the computer

to execute a script in order to complete a task regarding a selected help topic (see column 1, lines

57-60, and column 4, line 57 – column 6, line 3). Such scripts are particularly maintained in a

script library referred to as a "catalog file" (see column 13, lines 41-67). Consequently, like

recited in claim 51, Habib presents a script library for storing a plurality of script library objects

used by the help contents.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the

teachings of Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, PDF, Mandyam, and Habib

before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the help system taught by Hickman,

the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, PDF, and Mandyam such it includes buttons with

similar functionality to the "do-it-all" buttons described by Habib. It would have been

advantageous to one of ordinary skill to utilize such a combination because "do-it-all" buttons

provide a faster means of fixing a problem than that of manually fixing the problem, as is

expressed by Habib (see column 4, lines 15-19). Since particular sets of scripts are associated

with specific help contents, as is expressed above, it is apparent that with this combination of

Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, PDF, Mandyam, and Habib, there exists

some sort of store which is checked to identify which scripts to execute for particular help

content. Habib particularly discloses that, for the help content to access a script, the help content

must know the name of the script (see column 13, lines 41-65, particularly lines 49-52).

Consequently, each help topic necessarily comprises storage for storing information, specifically

the names of required scripts, which identifies that the help content associated with the topic is

authorized to access such scripts. The help application checks these script names to determine what scripts the help content is allowed to access. Such storage storing these script names is therefore considered an "authorization store," like that described in claim 60.

Accordingly, Hickman, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art, Irwin, PDF, Mandyam, and Habib teach a computer like that of claim 60.
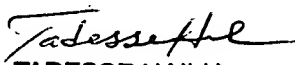
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Blaine Basom whose telephone number is (571) 272-4044. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stephen Hong can be reached on (571) 272-4124. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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